

\$2

AUGUST 9, 2024 | VOLUME 15 | ISSUE 17

YOUR PURCHASE BENEFITS THE VENDORS.  
PLEASE BUY ONLY FROM BADGED VENDORS.

First Year of Care-Based Safety:  
workshops, community building  
and place-based response. **page 6**

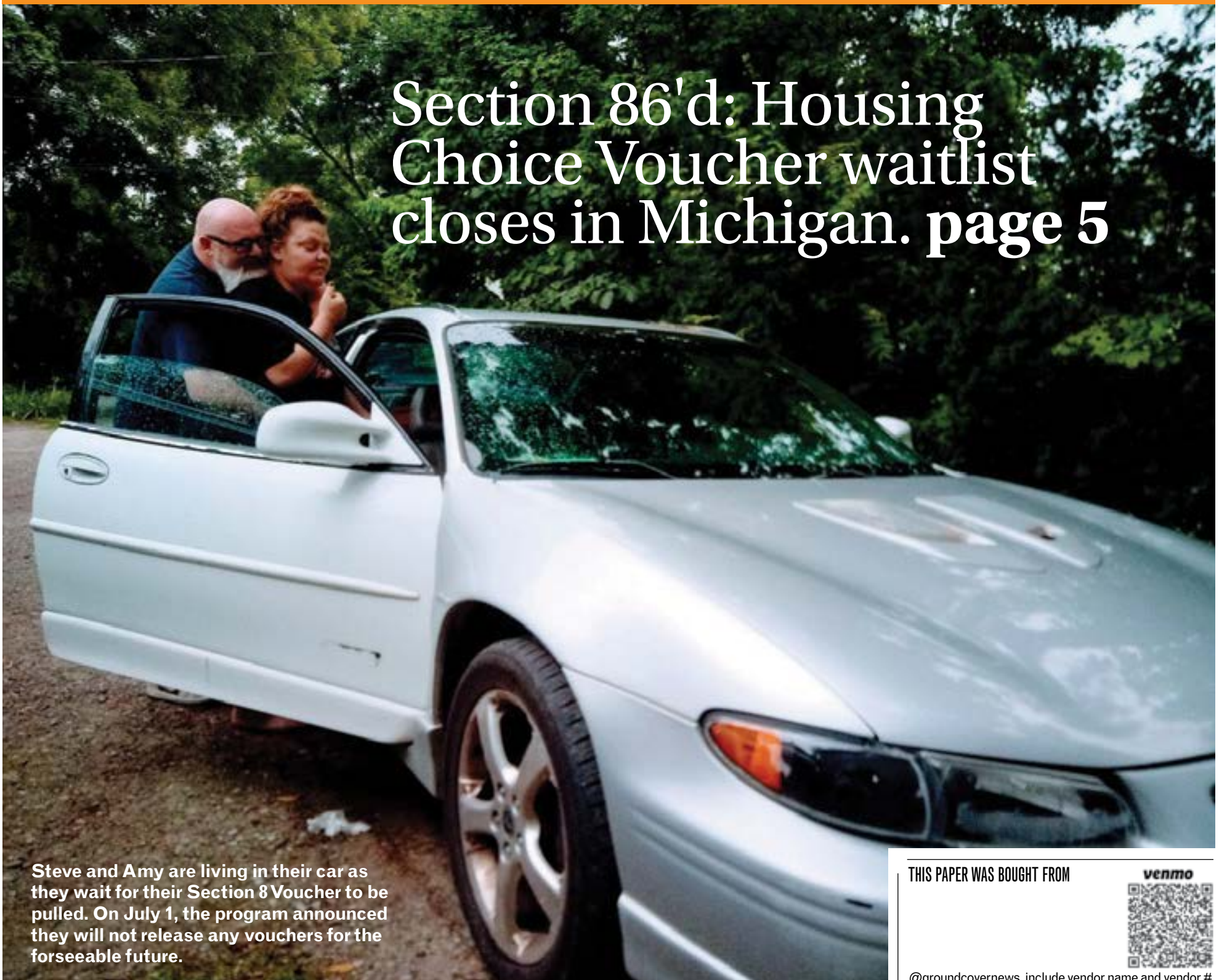


MEET YOUR  
VENDOR:  
**KEITH  
WILSON**  
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# GROUND COVER

NEWS AND SOLUTIONS FROM THE GROUND UP | WASHTENAW COUNTY, MICH.

Section 86'd: Housing  
Choice Voucher waitlist  
closes in Michigan. **page 5**



Steve and Amy are living in their car as they wait for their Section 8 Voucher to be pulled. On July 1, the program announced they will not release any vouchers for the foreseeable future.

THIS PAPER WAS BOUGHT FROM



@groundcovernews, include vendor name and vendor #



from the **DIRECTOR'S DESK**



LINDSAY CALKA  
Managing director

Did you know that the Vendor Code of Conduct is printed in every paper? (Check out page 9, beneath the puzzles.) Every Groundcover News vendor agrees to this Code of Conduct on their first day; it is a list of our rules, a reflection of our culture and also a framework of how to sell the paper successfully while upholding the reputation of the organization.

One very important element of the Code is: **I will wear and display my badge while selling the paper.** The badge is the only uniform piece that we require vendors to wear. The badge signals to you, the

customer, that the vendor has been through the New Vendor Orientation, has purchased their papers from the office, and is accountable to the other vendors and the organization. Perhaps most importantly, the badge contains a solicitation permit for the municipalities they sell in — a permit that makes the act of selling Groundcover legal.

The sentence “Please only buy from badged vendors” is printed on the cover of every Groundcover newspaper and magazine. Recently we have had a handful of people who are not, or are no longer, affiliated with Groundcover News incessantly try to sell the newspaper. We stamp the newspapers with Vendor Numbers to ensure Venmo sales go to vendors, and to track where papers are moving once they leave the office.

Consequently, this call to customers has become ever more important: Please only buy from badged vendors, and check whether the number stamped on the paper matches the badge. If not, you might not be buying from a Groundcover vendor. Please contact the office if this happens.

GROUNDCOVER NEWS

Groundcover News, a 501(c)(3) organization, was founded in April 2010 as a means to empower low-income persons to make the transitions from homeless to housed, and from jobless to employed.

Vendors purchase each copy of our regular editions of Groundcover News at our office for 50 cents. This money goes toward production costs. Vendors work selling the paper on the street for \$2, keeping all income and tips from each sale.

Street papers like Groundcover News exist in cities all over the United States, as well as in more than 40 other countries, in an effort to raise awareness of the plight of homeless people and combat the increase in poverty. Our paper is a proud member of the International Network of Street Papers.

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**PROMOTING AN ACTION** TO BUILD A JUST, CARING AND INCLUSIVE SOCIETY.

GROUNDCOVER NEWS ADVERTISING RATES				PACKAGE PRICING
Size	Black/White	Color	Dimensions (W x H in inches)	
1/8	\$110.00	\$150.00	5 X 3 or 2.5 X 6.5	Three Months/Six Issues: <b>15%</b> off
1/6	\$145.00	\$200.00	5 X 4	Six Months/Twelve Issues: <b>25%</b> off
1/4	\$200.00	\$265.00	5 X 6.25	Full Year/Twenty-four Issues: <b>35%</b> off
1/2	\$375.00	\$500.00	5 X 13 or 10.25 X 6.5	Only run for two weeks/one issue: <b>40%</b> off
full page	\$650.00	\$900.00	10.25 X 13	Additional <b>20%</b> discount for money saving coupons

MEET YOUR VENDOR



Keith Wilson,  
vendor No. 637

**In one sentence, who are you?**  
I am a father, coach, pipefitter, as well as a great guy.

**Where do you usually sell Groundcover?**  
All over — but you can catch me on Ashley and Liberty.

**When and why did you start selling Groundcover?**  
Earlier this year. I was broke.

**What is your favorite thing to do in Ann Arbor?**  
Shoot pool.

**What words do you live by?**  
Never forget what a person does for you or what a person does to you.

**What is something about you that someone on the street wouldn't know?**  
I'm a hopeless romantic.

**What motivates you to work hard selling Groundcover?**  
My brother James Woods.

**What is something you wish you knew more about?**  
The stock market.



Undercover art intel: party time at the Ann Arbor Art Fair

My journey through the Ann Arbor Art Fair (July 18-20, 2024) was very exciting and much anticipated. Art is loved in this town and mural art has been exploited over the past five years. One cannot drive anywhere in Ann Arbor without seeing large art installations on buildings and underpasses. There are new flowers painted on the bridge and underpass near Delonis Center and on the nearby railroad bridge on Miller Ave. This was finished during the Art Fair this year. (See “The Art of Gentrification” in the July 12 Groundcover News.)

This year, walking along the downtown Main Street Art Fair I saw many different kinds of art — two-dimensional, three-dimensional, jewelry and more. My personal favorite has always been animals from an artist named Mr. Faun who is always in the same location. He does wonderful images of so many different animals as well as flowers, including my faves: pandas, dragons and roses.

As I walked up Liberty Street I saw so much color this year, from abstract paintings to colored blown glass and the vibrant illustrations of fantasy scenes. I was awestruck with the details in much of the work this year. Hours upon hours of love goes into some of the work and the price doesn't do it justice.

What I find hard for artists is the level at which art is graded by price.



CINDY GERE  
Groundcover vendor No. 279

What I feel is cheap art is by far priced out of a common person's reach, and yet what is considered cheap art is so wonderful to look at and needs to be in a higher price range. The argument has always been over what art is truly worth and so artists struggle with this forever.

Almost to the end of Liberty Street, I came upon the political and nonprofit organization section for social justice issues, religions and electoral politics. What I chose to get was the free candy they give out, fun fun yum yum!

I walked up to State Street and turned right; this is where I found the African American art bead vendor. He remembered me from last year and so I got some wonderful beads. As a Native American, it's hard to come by beads now without paying a huge amount. Each vendor on State Street is fun to see, from discounted clothes to wonderful food.

I walked up to State Street and turned right; this is where I found the African American art bead vendor. He remembered me from last year and so I got some wonderful beads. As a Native American, it's hard to come by beads now without paying a huge amount. Each vendor on State Street is fun to see, from discounted clothes to wonderful food.

Dave Bing NBA Hall of Famer

David (Dave) Bing played nine seasons for the Detroit Pistons, two seasons with the Washington Bullets and one season with the



HOSEA HILL  
Groundcover vendor No. 532

Boston Celtics. According to hoophall.com, “Located in Springfield, Massachusetts, the Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame is an independent non-profit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to promoting, preserving and celebrating the game of basketball at every level.” The Naismith basketball Hall of Fame is named after John Naismith

As I walked down to William Street, I chose to look at the different precious gems and metal workers who create totally custom-made art — one of a kind. Every jeweler was unique: some were totally modern while others had a time period attached to them, such as the 1800s.

I wandered up past the University of Michigan Law School and this one artist stuck out like no other. She was a Fimo artist (Fimo is a type of clay) with very vibrant colors, and being a colorist myself, I fell in love. She had just about everything someone could want, from magnets to pins and free-standing caricatures to sculptures that looked like they were right out of a Jim Henson Muppet movie — she had it all! This was for me the ultimate fun this year.

Each artist touched me with their artwork and as I wandered down a lonely path on a side street, I found the hat that has eluded me for years. This vendor artist had wonderful vibrant colorful hats for sale. I chose to get a black one as others looked like Indiana Jones was ready to show up. It was fun to see the large variety of hats at this booth.

My Art Fair was full of fun and colors and new ideas. I hope you had as much fun as I did this year. 2025 Art Fair here we come ...



# Houston has success with "Housing First" strategy

CBS Sunday Morning broadcast on April 14 told the story of Houston's "Housing First" model. The story, narrated by reporter Martha Teichner, was titled "Inside Houston's Successful Strategy to Reduce Homelessness." Kelly Young, President of the Coalition for the Homeless of Houston-Harris County, said that the Housing First model which was implemented in Houston should be followed by other cities in the nation. She noted, "We were one of the worst in the nation to begin with, in 2011, 2012. Since then, homelessness is down 63% in the greater Houston area, and more than 30,000 people have been housed."

Teichner talked to many of the organizers and beneficiaries of Houston's Housing First Program. How did they do it? Instead of having dozens of homeless advocacy groups work separately on the services or programs they provide to the homeless, the community chose to create an umbrella organization known as The Way Home. This new organization is collaborative and is now called The Coalition for the Homeless of Houston-Harris County. The coalition agreed to have one president and CEO, Kelly Young; one Project Communication and Strategy Director, Mandy Chapman; Mayor's Special Assistant Marc Eichenbaum and a dedicated board.

## What is Housing First?

Like the Y Foundation Housing First of metropolitan Helsinki, Finland, Houston's The Way Home Umbrella totally embraced the concepts and applications of Housing First. The National Alliance to End Homelessness provided a clear concept and definition of Housing First in a publication dated March 20, 2022: "Housing First is a homeless assistance approach that prioritizes providing permanent housing to people experiencing homelessness, thus ending their homelessness and serving as a platform from which they can pursue personal goals and improve their quality of life."

"This approach is guided by the belief that people need basic necessities like food and a place to live before attending to anything less critical, such as getting a job, budgeting properly, or tackling substance use issues. Additionally, Housing First is based on the understanding that client choice is valuable in housing selection and supportive service participation, and that exercising that choice is likely to make a client more successful in remaining housed and improving their life."

The publication observes the differences between Housing First and other approaches. It states, "Housing



WILL SHAKESPEARE  
Groundcover vendor No. 258

First does not require people experiencing homelessness to address ... all of their problems including behavioral health problems, or to graduate through a series of services programs before they can access housing. Housing First does not mandate participation in services either before obtaining housing or in order to retain housing. The Housing First approach views housing as the foundation for life improvement and enables access to permanent housing."

The Housing First concept discussed above is a generic concept definition. The U.S. Housing and Urban Development department's report titled "Housing First in Permanent Supportive Housing" attempted to provide a more concise definition of Housing First. HUD stated, "Housing First is an approach to quickly and successfully connect individuals and families experiencing homelessness to permanent housing without preconditions and barriers to entry, such as sobriety, treatment or service participation requirements. Supportive services are offered to maximize housing stability and prevent returns to homelessness as opposed to addressing treatment goals prior to permanent housing entry."

On July 14, 2022, writer Robert Davis of the online magazine "Invisible People" stated that Housing First was first pioneered in the U.S. in the 1990s. It was developed by a professor named Dr. Sam Tsemberis.

Housing First is premised on the principles — (a) Homelessness is first and foremost a housing crisis and can be addressed through the provision of safe and affordable housing; (b) All people experiencing homelessness, regardless of their housing history and duration of homelessness, can achieve housing stability in permanent housing. Some may need very little support for a brief period of time, while others may need more intensive and long-term supports; Everyone is "housing ready." Sobriety, compliance in treatment, or even non-criminal histories are not necessary to succeed in housing. Rather, homelessness programs and housing providers must be



## More than 100 nonprofit, grassroots and government organizations are assembled under The Way Home Umbrella.

"consumer ready;" (c) Many people experience improvement in quality of life in the areas of health, mental health, substance use and employment as a result of obtaining housing; (d) People experiencing homelessness have the right to self-determination and should be treated with dignity and respect; (e) The exact configuration of housing and services depends upon the needs and preferences of the population.

## Houston's Housing First Implementation Strategy

As noted in the introductory paragraphs, Houston was able to convince service and treatment providers, nonprofit philanthropy groups, and other homeless advocacy centers in the community, to join a coalition known as the Coalition for the Homeless of Houston/Harris County. Houston's next strategic move was to go all in by adopting the key concepts and principles of Housing First.

Teichner of CBS Morning News talked to the newly housed individuals and families. She talked to outreach coordinators at some homeless encampments who use tracking devices to locate individuals with various needs, including permanent housing. She also talked to Young and the Housing First "architect" for The Way Home community umbrella, Mandy Chapman.

Teichner noted that Chapman "now advises other cities on how to replicate it, among them Dallas, New Orleans and Oklahoma City." In her conversation with Teichner, Chapman observed, "Our natural instinct when we see homelessness increasing is to hire more outreach workers and to build more shelters, beds ... The idea that if you have no permanent place to live, that you are also going to be able to transform and tackle complex mental health issues, addiction issues, complex financial issues? It's just unrealistic."

CBS Sunday Morning also reported that "Houston has dismantled 127 homeless encampments, but only after housing had been found for all the occupants. So far this year, The Way Home has already housed more than 750 people. It helps that the city, unlike many, has a supply of relatively affordable apartments, and that it was able to use roughly \$100 million in COVID aid to help pay for rentals on top of its other homeless relief dollars. But Houston's message is this: What's really essential to success is committing to homes, not just managing homelessness."

## Impacts and Lessons for Cities

Community impacts of Houston-Harris County's Housing First implementation are quite impressive:

- 32,000 homeless people permanently housed since 2012 by the partners of The Way Home
- 90% success rate for local housing programs. (People don't return homelessness within two years.)
- 22,300 unique people who accessed homeless assistance in 2022.
- \$179 million in public funding in 2023.
- \$50 million in HUD's Continuum of Care awarded to partners of The Way Home in 2023.
- Net-zero veteran homelessness in Harris County-Houston metro area.
- Over \$1.4 million awarded to The Way Home in 2024 for homeless youth.

On February 15, 2024, Groundcover News published an article titled, "Homelessness is a national crisis in America: lessons from Finland's 'Housing First' policies." Finland native Alexandra Granberg shared her knowledge of Finland/Helsinki's Housing First model with our local readers.

Many other cities have tried to

see HOUSTON page 11 ➡

# Section 86'd: Housing Choice Voucher waitlist closes in Michigan

Last month, the waiting list for Section 8 housing vouchers closed statewide. No new applications will be taken and existing renewals will not happen. The waiting list will be dropped entirely. This leaves some people who have been anxiously waiting for their spot for years feeling frustrated. The multi-year process of checking-in, preparing paperwork, meeting case managers can be a daunting effort. Two friends of mine are going through the process, Steve and Amy. They're navigating the challenging terrain of the Michigan State Housing Development Authority's (MSHDA) Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program, commonly known as Section 8. This program is essential for providing affordable housing to low-income residents, but the process can be fraught with difficulties, especially with the complexities of the waiting list in Washtenaw County.

The MSHDA Housing Choice Voucher Program operates on a waiting list system to manage the demand for affordable housing. In Washtenaw County, where the need is high, this waiting list can extend over several years. This lengthy wait often leads to considerable confusion and frustration for those seeking assistance. According to the County's website, there were over 2,400 vouchers administered in Washtenaw County in 2023, and 140 are reserved for homeless households.

One major issue is that the waiting list is dynamic rather than static. Applicants are placed on the list based on their application date and need, but changes can occur, including additions or removals based on various criteria. This can make it difficult for applicants to understand their current standing and predict when they might receive assistance.



Robbie (right) interviewing Amy and Steve (left, middle).



ROBBIE FEBRUARY  
Groundcover contributor

Due to budget constraints, the HCV program will not release any new vouchers for the foreseeable future. During this time, MSHDA will close all HCV waitlists to new additions starting July 1, 2024, and waitlists will remain closed until the budget allows for new vouchers to be released. Budget shortfalls from the federal government coupled with rising housing costs have created a deficit in the program.

## Misunderstandings

Complicating the process further are the project preferences that influence an applicant's waiting list status. MSHDA administers the HCV Program with various housing projects and landlords, each with their own criteria for accepting tenants. Preferences may prioritize certain demographics, such as veterans or individuals with disabilities, which can affect an applicant's placement on the waiting list.

Steve shared his frustration with the lack of clarity in the process: "We were living at the Purple House for the winter a few days a week. That is when we got the first letter about being kicked off the list. I am not used to this craziness. I don't know how any of this works."

Amy followed up, "We felt defeated. Like nobody cares, except people like Peggy [Lynch, founder of

Mercy House] and certain people at Delonis. It's stupid. I owned a trailer and tried to apply for Section 8. It could have totally eliminated this process. I could have saved my place."

"Seriously," Amy continued. "I had 23 teeth taken out and had emergency surgery this month. Recovering in my car is hard. We are so thankful for the car, but I have neuropathy. Have you experienced waking up in the winter with burning hot feet? Like someone has a f\*\*\*ing torch to your feet. But because of Peggy, no lie, this pain was significantly reduced."

"Well, it's shitty that someone has to recover from surgery sleeping on a floor or in a car seat," I replied.

"Duh," Amy and Steve say in unison.

## Administrative challenges and communication barriers

Administrative challenges within MSHDA itself further contribute to the difficulties. Bureaucratic processes can create barriers to effective communication and management of the waiting list. Many applicants, including Steve and Amy, report struggles with reaching MSHDA staff, receiving timely responses, or understanding the instructions provided. "I felt like we had no support from the County," Steve noted.

MSHDA's website and online resources, while useful, might not always be up-to-date or comprehensive. Applicants often rely on these resources for guidance, but outdated information can lead to misunderstandings about the waiting list process. The people who help locally are Delonis Center and HAWC (Housing Access of Washtenaw County).

Steve and Amy stayed in their car often last winter. They not only suffered from below freezing temperatures, they were also harassed by law enforcement. Steve said, "We were targeted by the police in November. Received multiple tickets on back to back days while caring for a friend sleeping in our car."

"Get one ticket that I can't afford to pay, then I get a late fee. My tags are soon expired and I can't get them updated until I catch up with the tickets. Even if we are homeless, we pay taxes. These \$100 tickets have

see HCV page 8 ➡

# What's Happening at the Ann Arbor District Library

## Open 10am-8pm Daily

Hang out in any of our five locations across town, browsing books, magazines, newspapers, and more, or check out movies, CDs, art prints, musical instruments, and home tools—you name it! Study and meeting rooms, fast and free WiFi, and plenty of places to sit and hang out.

## The Summer Game

If you're reading this, the 2024 Summer Game is officially in full swing! Use your Library this summer to find codes, solve puzzles, attend events, and earn points toward awesome AADL prizes. Visit [aadl.org/play](http://aadl.org/play) to learn more and get started!

## Fifth Avenue Press

AADL founded Fifth Avenue Press in 2017 to support the local writing community and promote the creation of original content. The imprint publishes works by authors who live in Washtenaw County. Consider submitting your finished manuscript to Fifth Avenue Press today at [fifthave.aadl.org](http://fifthave.aadl.org).

## FEATURED EVENT

# Summer Game SKATE

## Friday, August 23 • 6-8pm Yost Ice Arena

Join AADL at Yost Ice Arena to celebrate the end of Summer Game 2024! There will be no charge for admission or skate rentals. Eli and his game code shirt will be in attendance. Please note: Skate at your own risk!



# First year of Care-Based Safety: workshops, community building, place-based response

On June 18, the Wayne Police Department murdered John Zook Jr. He called the police for help during a mental health crisis and they responded by shooting him six times.

On July 6, the Sangamon County Sheriff's Department in Springfield, Ill. murdered Sonya Massey in her own kitchen after she called 911 to report a possible intruder in her home.

We hear stories like this far too often when it comes to police and ordinary citizens in distress.

"Care-Based Safety" is an unarmed response organization, established in September 2023. Their main objective and purpose is to keep people of color, Indigenous, undocumented, unhoused, LGBTQIA+, people using drugs, and/or those experiencing mental health struggles safe by addressing:

- Conflict such as arguments, disagreements
- Basic first aid (wound care, wellness checks)
- Overdose prevention, reversal, and aftercare
- Noise complaints and neighbor concerns
- Distress related to mental health and other stressors

Care-Based Safety is building a community response program that brings loving, unarmed support to people directly impacted by structural violence.

The Ypsilanti Care-Based Response pilot program has been operating throughout the summer in the downtown area. They work out of 16 S. Washington St. in partnership with Growing Hope and FedUp Ministries to respond to conflicts and troubling issues that might occur in the downtown area.

Care-Based Safety planned to serve the most vulnerable in the Ann Arbor area as well, but on Dec. 18, 2023, Ann Arbor voted to cancel their most recent Request for Proposals (RFP) for an unarmed response program. Care-Based Safety was the only organization that submitted a proposal to this RFP, so Ann Arbor effectively rejected CBS when they canceled it. The Ann Arbor City Council received many negative comments from CBS supporters, but didn't change its vote.

Note that Care Based Safety is the first and only unarmed response organization in the state.

I talked to Washtenaw County native Liz Kennedy, the director, who leads operations and culture work at Care-Based Safety. "How do you like your job at CBS?" I asked. She said, "I love



MIKE JONES  
Groundcover vendor No. 113



Top: Music circle at the place-based pilot. Bottom: CBS staff members Amal Omer, Robert Ramaswamy, Sheri Wander and Marquise Williams.

it. It's an amazing opportunity to bring a purely non-police community-led program here in Ypsilanti. I grew up in Washtenaw County, and I lost a lot of loved ones to overdoses, violence and incarceration over the years. I myself am a survivor, so it is a really humbling experience to be able to support and bring a program like this to life because I feel we as a community need more options, more tools in the tool box, when it comes to getting crisis care and healing support."

I also asked her, "Why does this community need CBS?" She answered, "The community we serve asked for CBS. We are a very diverse group of community leaders who work, live and play in Ypsilanti and Ann Arbor, and in the wider Washtenaw County community. We are the representatives of people who are most impacted by police and all of state violence like people of color, trans and queer, and those suffering from mental health issues, and together we are developing a care-based system for all. Care-Based Safety is created by us and for us."

I also had a chance to talk to Community-Building Lead Sheri Wander, and she wanted our readers to know: "The pilot program is a place-based pilot, meaning we will be in the downtown area and if any crisis or conflict is brought to our attention, we will respond from there (not in response to a phone number). In part, this is a capacity issue, because we don't have the people or funding to have an outward facing phone number that would allow us to respond to a large geographic area. But also, there is a particular need in this area. So many people hang out downtown, [people with] intersecting identities, people of color, poor, homeless, [with] alcohol and substance abuse — leaving many in our community vulnerable to over-policing and the penal system."

"The pilot program is largely about community building. When we co-created Care-Based Safety through listening sessions and surveys, we heard over and over that 50% of the work

should be about community-building. Building trust and a safety net in our community is the only way for it to be successful. And that those who respond to whatever situations that might occur in our community should be from the community.

"We plan to have days where we have fun: dance parties, karaoke, rap contests — and we have cornhole and a giant Jenga game. And also be on the lookout on really hot days for us to host a cooling center for those who need to escape the harsh summer heat."

"We also hope people will give

monetary donations, and/or their time and services so we can better help our community with resources needed. Visit our website to donate and for more information on how to get involved: [carebasedsafety.org](http://carebasedsafety.org)

"For those who need these services, we will be at 16 S. Washington St, every Wednesday and Thursday from 5-9 p.m. throughout summer."

Note: Wellness Wednesdays include: Haircuts, foot care and more.

Thursday's Fundays includes: Music, dance, and games.

Be safe, and have a great summer!



**St. Francis of Assisi Parish**

"If God were your Father, you would love me,  
for I came from God and am here;  
I did not come on my own, but he sent me."  
— Christ Jesus (John 8:42)

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# Visual Arts Contest winners announced

## GROUND COVER STAFF

## PHOTO



**Juried choice:** Hosea Hill  
**Popular choice:** Cindy Gere

## PAINTING



**Juried choice:** Robbie February  
**Popular choice:** Cindy Gere

## DRAWING



**Juried choice:** James Manning  
**Popular choice:** Philip Spink

## OPEN/MIXED



**Juried choice:** Robbie February  
**Popular choice:** Terri Demar

On Sunday, August 4 we gathered at the Makeshift Gallery to celebrate the close of the 2024 Groundcover News Visual Arts Contest. We listened to music by Desmond Bratton, Randall McCaleb, Violin Monster and Amanda Gale. The community cast the last votes for their favorite submissions.

The popular choice was decided by tallying the 21 online votes and 265 physical ballots. Our panel of judges — composed of Washtenaw County artists Barry Chattillion, T'onna Clemmons, Denali Gere and Ria Daugherty — selected the four juried winners through a consensus process.

Thank you to all who engaged with this project over the summer — buying each of the summer issues featuring the submitted artwork, visiting and viewing the work at the downtown AADL or the Makeshift Gallery. Thank you to the donors who made this arts contest possible. And of course, thank you to all the artists who submitted work — it is your creations and talents that made this contest worth doing!

If you have any feedback, ideas for next year, or would like to participate in planning the project, reach out to [contact@groundcovernews.com](mailto:contact@groundcovernews.com)





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➔ HCV from page 5

kept Amy and I in a precarious situation for months. The stress of it has caused a few medical concerns. We have had four surgeries between the two of us in the last 30 days. This isn't any way to heal and it will cause us years of recovery that could have and should have been prevented."

Amy reaches out for Steve's hand and we continue the interview.

"I met Steve in first grade." Amy added, "I was married for 15 years with two kids. My husband passed away in 2015 and my life has been a mess since. I was 35 when he died. We had no insurance, nothing. I had a trailer in Wixom. Steve and I stayed in touch and started traveling together in November 2022. We were in the same situation, we were f\*\*\*ed and let's just say we were still f\*\*\*ed. We chose to find shelter together compared to two bad separate home situations."

Steve said "The first letter we got [from MSHDA] stated that it was determined that we were housed. I was like 'When? And how the f\*\*\* did anyone determine we were housed?' We followed up with them and I felt the community was turning on me. We were in a lot of contact with PATH. Or maybe sh\*t got lost in the shuffle. Last year, PATH would come out and check on us. This year I feel like we have no support from the County."

Addressing the confusion

To address these issues in Washtenaw County, several measures could be considered:

1.Improve mail handling: Ensuring reliable mail delivery for shelters like the Delonis Center is crucial. MSHDA should work with these facilities to resolve mail issues and explore alternative communication methods, such as digital notifications or secure online portals.

2.Improve communication: The HCV program could improve its communication strategies by providing clear, detailed instructions and updates about the waiting list process. Enhancing accessibility through multiple communication channels would also be beneficial.

3.Clarity project preferences: Offering transparent information about project preferences and criteria would help applicants understand how these factors affect their waiting list status. Clear guidelines can aid applicants in making more informed decisions.

4.Simplifying administrative procedures: This will improve efficiency and reduce delays. Investing in technology and staff training might enhance waiting list management and applicant experience.

5.Provide educational resources: Offering workshops or resources to educate applicants about the waiting

list process, their rights, and available options can empower them to navigate the system more effectively.

By tackling these areas, MSHDA can better support applicants like Steve and Amy, reducing the stress and uncertainty associated with the waiting list and ultimately providing more effective and equitable affordable housing assistance.

MSHDA will continue to provide rental assistance on behalf of current HCV participants as their program participation is not impacted by the shortfall. MSHDA may continue to assist families in these programs: Project-Based Voucher program, Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing program, and the Stability Voucher program.

People who are seeking publicly funded housing should take heart. Many other states have suspended their waiting lists only to reopen them again. New York recently reopened a previously closed list. Over two hundred thousand people applied for less than three thousand vouchers, but there are other opportunities as well.

Steve adds a personal note: "I can still beat up on some of those younger guys on the disc golf course. When I'm done, I'll whip them up with a tasty dish of Stevey sauce served on my favorite disc." His humor underscores the resilience and determination that keep him and Amy going despite the challenges they face.

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Sudoku ★★★★★ 4puz.com

	9	1	3	6				
4		6						
3				8		6	5	
					4		7	
1	2		5		6		4	8
	4		7					
	5	3		7				4
						2		6
				9	3	7	1	

Fill in the squares so that each row, column, and 3-by-3 box contain the numbers 1 through 9.

Groundcover Vendor Code

While Groundcover is a non-profit, and paper vendors are self-employed contractors, we still have expectations of how vendors should conduct themselves while selling and representing the paper.

The following is our **Vendor Code of Conduct**, which every vendor reads and signs before receiving a badge and papers. We request that if you discover a vendor violating any tenets of the Code, please contact us and provide as many details as possible. Our paper and our vendors should be positively impacting our County.

- Groundcover will be distributed for a voluntary donation. I agree not to ask for more than the cover price or solicit donations by any other means.
- When selling Groundcover, I will always have the current biweekly issue of Groundcover available for customer purchase.
- I agree not to sell additional goods or products when selling the paper or to panhandle, including panhandling with only one paper or selling past monthly issues.
- I will wear and display my badge when selling papers and refrain from wearing it or other Groundcover gear when engaged in other activities.
- I will only purchase the paper from Groundcover Staff and will not sell to or buy papers from other

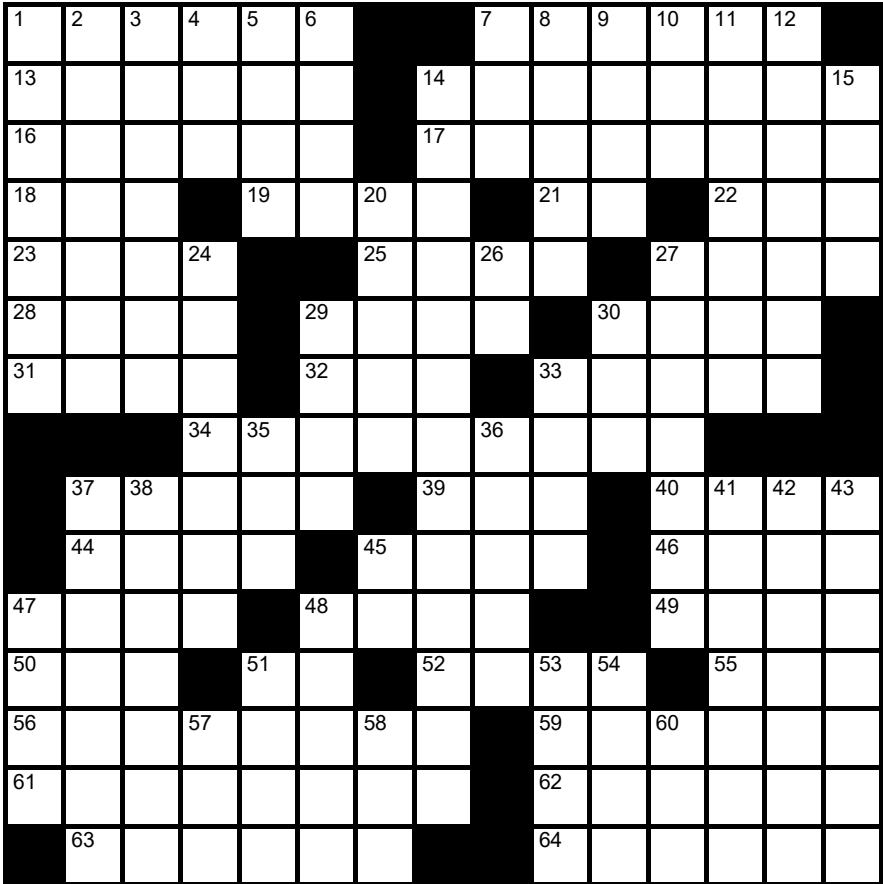
Groundcover vendors, especially vendors who have been suspended or terminated.

- I agree to treat all customers, staff, and other vendors respectfully. I will not "hard sell," threaten, harass or pressure customers, staff, or other vendors verbally or physically.
- I will not sell Groundcover under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- I understand that I am not a legal employee of Groundcover but a contracted worker responsible for my own well-being and income.
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- I agree to stay at least one block away from another vendor in downtown areas. I will also abide by the Vendor Corner Policy.
- I understand that Groundcover strives to be a paper that covers topics of homelessness and poverty while providing sources of income for the homeless. I will try to help in this effort and spread the word.

If you would like to report a violation of the Vendor Code please email contact@groundcovernews.com or fill out the contact form on our website.

CROSSWORD

from the International Network of Street Papers



ACROSS

- Corner store
- Cite as evidence
- Made square
- Congenial
- Led
- Ornamental purple flower
- Make a mistake
- Part of GPS (Abbr.)
- \_\_\_ Havre, French seaport
- Neck accessory
- "Smart" one
- Confined, with "up"
- Defensive spray
- Gossip, slang
- 007
- Cast a ballot
- "La Scala di \_\_\_" (Rossini opera)
- Not at home
- \_\_\_ Rapids, Iowa
- Viking weapon
- Of dairy cows
- What might come before the chicken
- Barber's motion
- "Don't bet \_\_\_!"
- Part of TLC
- Ditty
- "What are the \_\_\_?"
- Information unit
- Swerves at sea
- Something old, something \_\_\_
- Yes, in Spanish
- Disliked, in a text (Abbr.)
- After expenses
- Upholster's heavy, floral friend
- Scalawag
- One working at a copy shop, maybe
- Ace place?
- \_\_\_ Roots"
- Looked after, with "to"

DOWN

- Decapitates
- Cover
- Honey
- Armageddon
- Orders to plow horses
- Mark of "Game of Thrones"
- Austrian river
- Gave out, as cards
- "Truth or \_\_\_"
- "Born in the \_\_\_"
- Choral composition
- Siren
- Shiny shoe material
- Old-fashioned "you"
- Shoot off one's mouth
- White Burgundy wine
- Bismarck st.
- Demureness
- The two of them
- Annoy
- Hamster's home
- Division of a play
- "Snowy" bird
- Contemporary people
- Lived inside, as a spirit
- Multifaceted
- Incorporate something into a fabric
- Crushed into a powder
- Famous baseball pitcher Young
- "\_\_\_ bitten, twice shy"
- Pig out
- Achy
- At one time, at one time
- Valley
- Toni Morrison's "\_\_\_ Baby"
- Nothin' but \_\_\_!
- Merkley or Wyden, e.g. (Abbr.)



# A breakdown of Homer's The Iliad

Not being a lover of Classical Literature, I found it hard to read The Iliad. My saving grace is that as a grandson of George Glenn Cameron, a former archaeologist and History teacher, I followed in his footsteps as a student of anthropology at Eastern Michigan University. My understanding of the Iliad is due to the writing style of Homer, and my being a student of Hermetic and Ceremonial Magic, and a lover of the mysteries of the gods/goddesses. And that Homer begins his book not as a dry run of the history of the Trojan War, but as dialogue between man and the divine.

Homer's books "The Iliad" and "The Odyssey" are required reading in many programs of Great Books, one of which, from beginning to end, "St. John's College, the Freshman level of Great Books," I am determined to finish in my spare time. All of us have at our disposal time to read ten pages a day of a particular book, in a form of self sacrifice of what else we may do with that amount of time on a daily basis.

This tale covers the Trojan War in prose style of classical literature. Not being an avid fan of history but rather religion and the anthropology of religion no less, it is fortuitous that the story begins as a dialogue between Man and his Divine source. Great heroes of the time are included in this tale. The Trojans and the Achaeans are both covered in this battle.

I must admit it took more than just the text in an English translation from Classical Greek, supplemented by Spark Notes and Cliffs Notes for me to comprehend the book.

How does this relate to homelessness and economic struggles in Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti? A fair question. It is because we all have inner battles and wars, sometimes spilling out into the physical realm — as within so without, as without, so within. In understanding a ship's crew in waters unknown, seeking dry land on which to dock and pursue unknown treasure, we can find that literature is a great treasure, helping us to understand life and death itself. Is death always easier than life? If we think so we are sadly mistaken, as it (Death) is our greatest foe we all must face, and we can choose to enter into it in the role of Coward or Hero.

This is not to say that Death is easy, nay, very much the opposite. The best we can do is to live a virtuous life and enter into the great unknown as a courageous hero, having fought our wars in life itself before meeting our ultimate end, seeking perhaps the very hand of Helen, Hera or the hand of Jove.

Our next foe of life is that of ignorance. To this end I seek to aid you, my dear reader, with a condensed under-



JAMIE CAMERON  
Groundcover vendor No. 612

standing of The Iliad. We can find in this story (and perhaps why Virgil and Shakespeare appear in my mind as I read this great tale) the Trickster God, or a god in his malicious role. In the form of a dream, the God Jove sent this lying spirit to the captain of the fleet. Many of us may view Jove, or Jupiter, as not only a father of gods and goddesses, but as the very source itself, both in roles of the trickster and a non-trickster. If we view life as a potential of a trickster as well as reality, a dream or in our waking up to reality from a world of dream, we may see a parallel, and that is what I seek to leave you with.

We in this world may not be unarmed, but none of us can afford to stroll down the street armed with spears and swords and shields. Nay, this would immediately put us in bonds. So I implore you to consider the times in which this tale took place. We now have the benefit of entire libraries at our disposal, a benefit of our times, despite those who seek to burn or ban books. Ignorance is our greatest foe.

May libraries become your — our — sanctuary, with a common theme as we seek to learn and understand, not just use it as a warming or cooling center as we go about our days and nights. Nay, make much use of these centers of learning. If the internet fails to work on a given day, there are still words on paper from which we can extract an education.

With that, I invite you to join me in the quest to understand the point of The Iliad and its characters, and perhaps see in our modern times the parallels to being homeless.

As you read this, we are seeing multiple wars across the globe, which in itself seek natural resources and people to exploit, and to seek treasures in the form of human and political power, money a bonus.

Achilles is not just a Greek restaurant, but a great man of renown, a hero. In Book One of The Iliad, Homer presents a quarrel between Achilles and Agamemnon, with Achilles aided

by the gods, and Agamemnon powerful himself as captain of the fleet and king of Mycenae. The Achaeans (Greeks) sought to make war with the Trojans due to the lying spirit sent by Jove in the dream of Agamemnon. It was stated in the dream that they, the Achaeans, would fight the Trojans and take the city of Troy. I am currently on the second book of The Iliad, so forgive my ignorance in writing this before finishing the book itself.

A parallel to what is occurring in this world is a competition between two parties seeking to take control of the United States, one as just another leader, while one wants to be not just a man but a king and God. You feel me on this point? If not, here is the spoiler — Harris and Trump.

Where this intersects with the homeless is by which social programs or policies one or the other seeks to exploit, corrupt or completely take away. Let us view Troy as the United States, and the treasures sought as the money behind the social programs and domestic and foreign policies.

Troy was set up to fall, aided by the gods, the hand of Helen as the prize to gain in a major war between the Achaeans and the Trojans. Helen may very well be the voting process, our democracy, as opposed to a monarchy that one party seeks. This will affect each and every one of us, in high places and low.

So who are the Achaeans and who are the Trojans? And of what shall be the fate of Troy? What gods shall we appease with burnt offerings? Where is the hand of Jove or Zeus himself in all of this? This may be viewed on the global theater: in Venezuela a tied election for or against the people; Ukraine, if victorious, will prevent a dictator from taking other countries at will. Should Ukraine fail to be aided by the gods, let us hope the hand of Zeus and

Hera be with us all. Let us set up altars for our household gods and goddesses, with regular offerings and praise.

In the end, let us hope our democracy stays and stands through our Heroine, rather than the man who wants to be King and a God himself. Let the trickle-down effect be seen, heard and felt in favor of the common (wo)man of this city of Troy (the United States). Let the Olympics not be a distraction in all of this. Let Olympus's gods and goddesses reign, and not man. Let the treasure (our election process) remain safe and guarded in the open, along with its trickle-down programs and policies.

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# Operation robin rescue: do's and dont's

I was on my way to the library. I had some applications to follow up on and I was going to orate my article for the Groundcover Speaks podcast. I was just making my way as I usually do —shouting obscenities at passersby and generally being offensive — when I saw a baby bird on the ground. This little bird didn't look happy. I looked up and I saw the nest, which was WAY TOO HIGH!!! I couldn't reach it. I was faced with a choice: I could give up my plans for the morning or say "that's life in the big city" to the bird and keep moving.

I picked up the little bird and I wondered what to do. I couldn't leave him to the ants, the life of a bird is short enough and they would get theirs soon enough. A man walked up to a pick-up truck nearby and I asked him if he would help. He said yes! But when we examined the area below the nest site his truck was not going to fit. "Oy vey," he said with a sad look on his face. He wanted to help, but the planters by the tree were not gonna move. Those planters have to weigh tons! So I thanked the kind man and I figured maybe someone at the Groundcover office might help?

They sure weren't expecting me to walk into the office at that time and definitely not with some kind of dang baby bird. But I did it anyway. I thought maybe there would be a step ladder or something we could get. Many people were apprehensive about the bird's fate. Many said, "You touched it, now the momma bird will reject it." I explained if I didn't the poor bird was destined to be ant food, so I had to try. It turns out I did the right thing.

I went outside the office and turned over rocks till I found a grub and two worms. I didn't go full on momma bird and chew them up, but I did smash them a bit.

The bird bros had this to say: "If you find a baby bird, it likely does not need your help unless it is featherless or has its eyes closed. These birds are nestlings and aren't ready to leave the nest yet. If you can locate the nest nearby, the



TONY SMITH  
Groundcover contributor

best thing to do is simply place the nestling back in the nest. If you cannot locate the nest, leave the nestling where you found it or move it to a shaded area. The parents will come back. Don't worry, your scent won't deter the parents.

"As birds get bigger, they outgrow the nest and need room to move around, flap their wings and learn to fly. These more developed birds are fledglings and they can easily be identified by their more developed feathers. They can hop and flutter on their own. Fledglings don't need help — their parents are nearby and still caring for them. Be sure to give them plenty of space." (US Fish and Wildlife)

It's important to know the stages of a bird; when they first leave the nest it might be awkward. My guy seemed like late stage two to me. Baby birds go through three stages:

**Hatchling (usually 0-3 days old).** It hasn't yet opened its eyes, and may have wisps of down on its body. It's not ready to leave the nest.

**Nestling (usually 3-13 days old).** Its eyes are open, and its wing feathers may look like tubes because they've yet to break through their protective sheaths. It's also not ready to leave the nest.

**Fledgling (13-14 days old or older).** This bird is fully feathered. Its wings and tail may be short, and it may not be a great flyer, but it can walk, hop or flutter. It has left the nest, though its parents may be nearby, taking good care of it.

## How to Help a Grounded Baby Bird

When you come upon a hatchling or nestling on the ground, look for a nest in the area; it's likely to be within a few yards. Then follow these steps: (1) Put on gloves (or, if you don't have gloves, wash your hands). (2) Gently pick up the baby bird and place it back into the nest.

Note: If the nest has been damaged or is too high to reach, you can place the bird in a woven basket from your local garden store and hang it on a low branch. A basket looks to birds like a natural nest and the weave design will allow rainwater to drain through it and prevent the baby bird from drowning. Watch from a distance to see if the parent comes back to the nest. This may take a few hours, so if you can't stay, try to come back later that day to check.

If the parent bird doesn't return to the nest, or you can't find the nest:

- Using gloved or clean hands, place the bird in a container (e.g., a shoe box) lined with soft cloth. You can use paper towels, a baby blanket or a piece of clothing.
- If you have a heating pad, place it on the lowest setting and put it under the soft bedding to keep the baby bird warm. A hot water bottle also works well.
- Place the box with the baby bird in a dark, quiet place away from people and pets.
- Don't give the bird food or water.
- Contact your local wildlife rehabilitation center to arrange for further care.

I left the Groundcover office with the bird in a blue laundry container. I'd squished a few worms and a grub. I was this bird's mommy now — a mommy from Hell! I had a chair and one of the Groundcover reporters came with me in case I needed a hand. I was grateful for her because my plan involved balancing on a chair made during the Eisenhower administration. As luck would have it things would work out perfectly.

When we arrived at the corner I soon found out that the chair was not going

to cut it. So I had the idea of trying the library; the librarian was helpful but no one was available to help. So I returned to the scene. The little bird was chirping and its mother stood a distance away calmly watching the situation. Its little mouth opened wide and its eyes squinted hard so I gave it the last of the worms while I figured what to do. It was then birdy lightning struck.

Across the street were two guys one with a ladder of just the right size and another with a pull cart. I yelled and gesticulated wildly as I ran across the street. The look on their faces was definitely one of trepidation. That all changed when I told them the situation.

They gladly came to aid in my mission of mercy. We set up the ladder and got to business. During this time I learned that the pair worked for the city hanging banners on street lamps and putting up posters. Very likely you have passed their work many times. They may not paint the art for the pieces they hang, but if not for them and their coworkers the many beautiful pieces would not be hung so often and changed with good regularity. In an instant the heroes of this story turned from regular working guys into an elite bird rescue team.

As a backup, I had the number of the nature rehab people on deck, but as you will see in the film [<https://files.catbox.moe/5m22x3.mp4>], everything worked out.

A few days on everything looks fine, I've checked and no dead Birdy :). I did see their mother catching worms the next day, and heard the wee birds' near-ravenous peeping.

As I was doing the final revising of this piece I had another interesting bird experience. This time with a fledgling (the last stage of baby birds). It landed on my back and proceeded to chirp in my ears for like ten minutes. In this stage of bird development the birds can fly, but they are still learning. A nice lady wanted to keep the bird because she thought it was lost. Enjoy and be kind to our feathered friends.

➡ **HOUSTON** from page 4

implement the Housing First model with varying degrees of success and failure. Atlanta says that they succeeded in reducing their community's homeless population by 40% by using the Housing First approach. Dallas and Salt Lake City saw some improvements. However, Los Angeles is still searching for a significant

improvement after implementing the Housing First strategy. Grand Rapids/Kent County's coalition to end homelessness which includes more than 60 Continuum of Care partners recently plans to house 100 chronically homeless people within 100 days.

Houston's Housing First success story should resonate with local and state government leaders who are searching for durable solutions to their

challenges with unhoused, unsheltered and growing street homelessness. Houston presents a good case study. National Alliance to End Homelessness research has shown that Housing First is more cost effective than traditional rapid rehousing programs.

Washtenaw County is not as large an urban county as Harris County. However, Ann Arbor, the County Seat, lacks

affordable housing. Rent inflation continues to be too high. Ypsilanti is somewhat more affordable, but the cost of housing is rising there, too. Local and state governments should implement Housing First policies but they will likely need economic support from the federal government to make substantial headway.



# Mouth-watering meatballs

**ELIZABETH BAUMAN**  
Groundcover contributor

## Ingredients:

1 pound ground beef  
1 pound Italian sausage  
1 egg  
1/2 cup finely chopped onion  
1/4 cup chopped parsley (or a bit more)  
1/4 cup fresh grated Parmesan cheese  
4-ounce block of mozzarella cheese

## Directions:

Mix the first 6 ingredients together in a large bowl. Form into balls a little larger than a golf ball. Stuff with centimeter-cubed piece of mozzarella cheese.

Place on cookie sheet and bake for 10-12 minutes at 350 degrees. Do not allow the cheese to melt out of the meatball.



Remove from cookie sheet and blot to remove grease. Transfer to a pot of your favorite marinara sauce and allow meatballs to simmer for an additional 30-40 minutes.

Serve hot with spaghetti noodles.

## PUZZLE SOLUTIONS

5	9	1	3	6	2	4	8	7
4	8	6	1	5	7	3	2	9
3	7	2	4	8	9	6	5	1
6	3	8	9	1	4	5	7	2
1	2	7	5	3	6	9	4	8
9	4	5	7	2	8	1	6	3
2	5	3	6	7	1	8	9	4
7	1	9	8	4	5	2	3	6
8	6	4	2	9	3	7	1	5

B	O	D	E	G	A			A	D	D	U	C	E		
E	V	E	N	E	D			P	L	E	A	S	A	N	T
H	E	A	D	E	D			A	M	A	R	A	N	T	H
E	R		S	Y	S	T			L	E		T	I	E	
A	L	E	C			P	E	N	T		M	A	C	E	
D	I	S	H		B	O	N	D		V	O	T	E		
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	M	I	L	C	H		E	G	G		S	N	I	P	
	O	N	I	T		C	A	R	E		T	U	N	E	
O	D	D	S		B	Y	T	E			Y	A	W	S	
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	S	T	R	E	E	T			T	E	N	D	E	D	

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